



An extreme bushfire smoke pollution event: Health impacts and public health challenges

Author(s): Kolbe A, Gilchrist KL
Year: 2009
Journal: New South Wales Public Health Bulletin. 20 (2-Jan): 19-23

Abstract:

AIMS: To determine the health impacts of smoke and the effectiveness of public health advisories during a severe bushfire smoke event in Albury, NSW. **METHODS:** The NSW Department of Environment and Climate Change provided PM(10) data. A computer-assisted telephone survey using random digit dialling was conducted following the smoke event to assess health impacts and the effectiveness of advisories. **RESULTS:** The smoke event lasted 38 days. The maximum daily PM(10) level was 415 microg/m(3). Public health advisories were based on alerts for air pollution issued by NSW Department of Health. From the survey, a total of 389 interviews were available for analysis. At least one health effect of the smoke was reported by 70% of respondents and 5% reported seeking medical treatment. Over 74% reported seeing, hearing or reading the health advisories. Behaviour change was significantly greater in this group (odds ratio Euro Surveillance (Bulletin European Sur Les Maladies Transmissibles; European Communicable Disease Bulletin) 2.74; 95% confidence interval 1.50-5.02). **CONCLUSION:** High rates of health effects may be experienced by populations exposed to bushfire smoke pollution. Public health advisories can support behaviour change to reduce exposure to bushfire smoke.

Source: Ask your librarian to help locate this item.

Resource Description

Communication:

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change; surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

Communication Audience:

audience to whom the resource is directed

Health Professional, Public

Early Warning System:

resource focus on systems used to warn populations of high temperatures, extreme weather, or other elements of climate change to prevent harm to health

A focus of content

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Air Pollution, Extreme Weather Event

Air Pollution: Particulate Matter

Extreme Weather Event: Wildfires

Geographic Feature:

resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

Non-United States

Non-United States: Australasia

Health Impact:

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Injury, Respiratory Effect

Intervention:

strategy to prepare for or reduce the impact of climate change on health

A focus of content

Mitigation/Adaptation:

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

Resource Type:

format or standard characteristic of resource

Research Article

Resilience:

capacity of an individual, community, or institution to dynamically and effectively respond or adapt to shifting climate impact circumstances while continuing to function

A focus of content

Timescale:

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified

Vulnerability/Impact Assessment:



resource focus on process of identifying, quantifying, and prioritizing vulnerabilities in a system

A focus of content